

The President's Weekly Address

April 10, 2010

All across America are good, decent folks who meet their obligations each and every day. They work hard. They support their families. They try to make an honest living the best they can. And this weekend, many are sitting down to pay the taxes they owe, not because it's fun, but because it's a fundamental responsibility of our citizenship.

But in tough times, when many families are having trouble just making it all work, tax day can seem even more daunting. This year, however, many Americans are seeing some welcome relief.

So far, Americans who have filed their taxes have discovered that the average refund is up nearly 10 percent this year to an alltime high of about \$3,000. This is due in large part to the Recovery Act. In fact, one-third of the Recovery Act was made up of tax cuts—tax cuts that have already provided more than \$160 billion in relief for families and businesses, and nearly 100 billion of that goes directly into the pockets of working Americans.

No one I've met is looking for a handout, and that's not what these tax cuts are. Instead, they're targeted relief to help middle class families weather the storm, to jump-start our economy, and to bring the fundamentals of the American Dream—making an honest living, earning an education, owning a home, and raising a family—back within reach for millions of Americans.

First, because folks who work hard should be able to make a decent living, I kept a promise I made when I campaigned for this office and cut taxes for 95 percent of working Americans. For most Americans, this Making Work Pay tax credit began showing up in your paychecks last April. And it continues this year, for a total of \$400 per individual and \$800 per couple, per year.

Second, because a college education is critical to the success of our workers and our economy, we're helping to make it more affordable for millions of Americans. Millions of students and parents paying for college tuition are now eligible for up to \$2,500 under the American opportunity credit. Along with a host of other steps we've taken, this will help us reach our goal of once again having the highest proportion of college graduates in the world by 2020.

Third, we're restoring the home as a source of stability and an anchor of the American Dream. If you've bought a home for the first time, you're eligible for a credit of up to \$8,000. And if you bought a new car last year, you can deduct the State and local sales taxes you paid on that car.

Fourth, whether you bought a home for the first time or you've owned one for a long time, if you invested in making your home more energy efficient with certain improvements like new insulation or windows, or you plan to this year, you're eligible for up to \$1,500 in new tax credits. This does more than just put money back in your pocket; it's helping create new clean energy, manufacturing, and construction jobs at small businesses across the country.

Fifth, to help working families with children through difficult times, we increased the earned income tax credit and allowed more families to qualify for the child tax credit.

Finally, for those who lost their jobs in the recession and need some help getting back on their feet, we provided a 65 percent tax credit to help cover the cost of health care, and we made sure the first \$2,400 in unemployment benefits is tax-free.

These are among the tax breaks and savings that are available to over 100 million Americans right now. It's also important to note that the new health reform law includes the largest middle class tax cut for health care in history. And once it's implemented, millions of Americans will finally be able to purchase quality, affordable care and the security and peace of mind that comes with it.

And one thing we have not done is raise income taxes on families making less than \$250,000 a year. That's another promise that we've kept.

We've also made it easy to find out what's owed to you and your family. After all, the big guys know how to find their tax breaks; it's time you did too. Just visit whitehouse.gov and click on the tax savings tool. It's already been accessed more than 100,000 times by folks who want to see what savings they're owed and how to collect them. If you've already filed your taxes and missed some of the savings available to you, don't worry; you can still amend your returns after April 15th to save hundreds or even thousands of dollars.

And just as each of us meet our responsibilities as citizens, we expect our businesses and our Government to meet theirs in return. That's why I've asked Congress to close some of the biggest tax loopholes exploited by some of our most profitable corporations to avoid paying their fair share or, in some cases, paying taxes at all. That's why we're tightening Washington's belt by cutting programs that don't work and contracts that aren't fair and spending we don't need. And that's why I've proposed a freeze on discretionary spending, signed a law that restores the pay-as-you-go principle that helped produce the surpluses of the 1990s, and created a bipartisan, independent commission to help solve our fiscal crisis and close the deficits that have been growing for a decade. Because I refuse to leave our problems to the next generation.

It's been a tough couple years for America. But the economy is growing again. Companies are beginning to hire again. We are rewarding work and helping more of our people reach for the American Dream again. And while there's no doubt we still face a long journey together, with more steps to take, more obstacles to overcome, and more challenges to face along the way, if there is one thing on which the people of this great country have convinced me, it's that the United States of America will recover, stronger than before.

Thanks for listening, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 12:50 p.m. on April 7 in the Diplomatic Reception Room at the White House for broadcast on April 10. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 9 but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on April 10. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Weekly addresses.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Subjects: Budget, Federal : Congressional spending restraint; Budget, Federal : Deficit Reduction Commission; Budget, Federal : Government programs, spending reductions; Budget, Federal : Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2009; Business and industry : Small and

minority businesses; Economy, national : American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009; Economy, national : Improvement; Economy, national : Recession, effects; Economy, national : Strengthening efforts; Education : Postsecondary education :: Affordability; Education : Postsecondary education :: Tax credits, expansion; Employment and unemployment : Job creation and growth; Employment and unemployment : Job losses; Employment and unemployment : Unemployment insurance; Energy : Energy efficiency, tax incentives; Government organization and employees : Federal Government contracting policies, reform; Health and medical care : Health insurance, protection of coverage; Health and medical care : Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; Housing : First-time home purchase, tax credit; Taxation : Childcare expenses, tax credit; Taxation : Tax Code :: Reform; Taxation : Tax relief.

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